

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 23, 2019
7:00 P.M.
SUFFIELD TOWN HALL
83 MOUNTAIN ROAD, SUFFIELD CT**

Present: Melissa M. Mack, Joanne Sullivan, Tim Reynolds, Mel Chafetz and Pete Hill

Also in attendance: Nikki Lengyel – Youth Services Coordinator, Pete Leclerc – Parks and Recreation Director, Mark Cervione – Highway Foreman, Bill Hawkins – Town Planner and Chris Matejek – Facilities Manager

First Selectman Mack called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

First Selectman Mack expressed her deep appreciation to Highway Foreman Mark Cervione and the Highway Department for working tirelessly through the holiday weekend in order to keep our roads clear and our residents' safe during the recent snowstorm.

Approval of the Minutes from the January 9, 2019 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Hill motioned to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2019 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None

Update by Youth Services Coordinator

First Selectman Mack invited Youth Services Coordinator Nikki Lengyel to provide an update to the Selectmen on current and future programs/activities in the Youth Services Department. She also praised Miss Lengyel for her dedication to the job and noted that she has been extremely busy getting the youth center up and running as well as coordinating social/educational events, collaborating with the schools, tackling adolescent issues and bringing new ideas to light which will assist the youth of our community.

- Youth Center, located in the Suffield Senior Center, opened on Tuesday, January 22, 2019.
- Received a Zak Grant for purchase necessary items for the center.
- Snacks, Ping Pong, Foosball, Pool Table, board games and more will be available for grades 6-12.
- Winter Drop in hours will be:
 - Monday & Thursday 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

- Tuesday & Wednesday 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 - Homework Hour from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- A one-time registration form, signed by a parent is required for the school year.
- Suffield Youth Center welcomes students from Suffield Public Schools and Suffield Academy.
- Working with BOE Business Manager Bill Hoff to coordinate bus transport of students to Youth Center.
- Recent “Study with a Puppy” event was a success. Students were invited to come to the Youth Center to study as well as spend time with two therapy dogs.
- Upcoming events include:
 - Internet Safety and Social Media Presentation
 - Coordinating with Assistant School Superintendent Michele Zawawi and IT Director Becky Osleger.
 - 6th grade students and parents will be the target audience.
 - Event to be held on April 29th at 6:30 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Auditorium.
 - State Targeted Response Opioid Grant – Change the Script
 - Sending letters to all prescribers in Suffield regarding the CT Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System.
 - First Selectman Mack provided a letter of support.
 - Campaign materials will be distributed throughout town regarding opioid awareness and reducing the stigma of getting help.
 - Opioid Awareness Presentation – May 2nd
 - Chris Herren – Guest Speaker (Former Boston Celtics Basketball Player)
 - Presentation cost is fully covered by grants and an anonymous donor – no cost to the Town of Suffield
 - Resource Fair will be incorporated with this event; mental health and substance abuse providers will be on hand in the Commons area of the Suffield High School.
 - Enhancement Grant from CT State Dept. of Ed.
 - Will be used for anxiety focus.
 - Self-care night – Documentary on anxiety (56 min. video) will be shown, kids can make stress balls and win door prizes.
 - May also include Suffield Academy students.
 - Working with KML Teen/Youth Outreach Coordinator Wendy Mitzel to coordinate events and programs beneficial to the youth in our community. This will be especially important as we ready for the reopening of the Kent Memorial Library in 2019.

Selectman Chafetz noted that Miss Lengyel has been a great resource to the Juvenile Review Board (JRB) as they handle a larger and more complex caseload.

Selectman Hill also commented that he had heard positive feedback regarding the Study with a Puppy event. His daughter attended the event and expressed her hope that this type of event would continue.

Update by Parks & Recreation Director

First Selectman Mack invited Parks and Recreation Director Peter Leclerc to provide an update to the Selectmen on current and future activities in the Parks and Recreation Department.

- The new reorganized job description has been advertised.
- Over 100 applications were received.
- The applicants have been narrowed down to 12 individuals.
- Interviews to be held at the end of the month.
- Local candidates as well as those residing throughout the country have applied.
- March 15, 2019 is the target date for the position to be filled and the individual to be in place.
- The Parks and Recreation department currently has a 2nd year graduate student intern from Springfield College working with them. The intern has been very helpful with program work and daily activities of the department.
- P&R staff has recently gone through additional DCF training.
- The embedded DCF employee will be training the summer seasonal staff this year.
- The P&R Basketball program is in full swing.
- Pilot program is underway – “Family Friday Nights” (October thru April.)
- P&R recently held Family Friday Night with a “Frozen” sing along. Volunteers from the high school choir dressed as characters from the movie and mingled with the children. First Selectman Mack attended and noted that the event was great and well-received by the community.
- Sunrise Park playground is continuing to move forward. Design will be nature themed. Currently working with Rotary and Conservation Commission on the project and plan to reach out to the Friends of Suffield as a courtesy due to their involvement in the original playground.
- “Suffield Night” at the Hartford Yard Goats will be on Saturday, July 13, 2019. Event will include a “first pitch” honoree, a youth award presented prior to the game; a town singer will be performing after the 7th inning and fireworks at the end of the game.
- P&R intern will be tasked with reaching out to municipal representatives; youth sports representatives as well as the schools in order to spread the word.
- Advertising for tickets will begin shortly.
- Summer programs will include a volleyball clinic/camp and an American Idol type camp for youngsters.

Selectman Hill motioned to add Agenda item 5a. - Discussion and approval of Tax Deferment Program for Federal Shutdown Affected Employees. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

First Selectman Mack provided background information. “Governor Lamont signed HB7565 which is a loan program and municipal option provision to establish a program to defer the due date of specific property taxes owed by affected employees.” First Selectman Mack noted that this has just passed and she wanted to get this in front of the Board of Selectmen and move forward. First Selectman Mack has been consulting with the Town Tax Collector Jill Schectman

and who was “100% on board.” It will result in us not assessing interest or penalties, until the government opens and then there will be a timeframe in which affected individuals are allowed to pay their taxes before penalties would be assessed.

Questions/Discussion:

Selectman Reynolds – *“How do we know who these people are?”*

Selectman Chafetz – *“Do you know how many are in town?”*

First Selectman Mack – *“The individuals will be required to provide proof to the tax collector. I am not sure of the exact number of individuals, however, Suffield Community Aid has confirmed that we do have some residents who have been impacted and I feel strongly that we should support this.”*

Selectman Hill read the resolution as follows:

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A TAX DEFERMENT PROGRAM
FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY THE SHUTDOWN**

WHEREAS, the current shutdown of the Federal Government has impacted certain Federal Employees (“affected employee”), including those that are taxpayers of the Town; and

WHEREAS, HB 5765, defines "Affected employee" as a federal employee who, during the shutdown, is (A) a resident of this state, and (B) required to work as a federal employee without pay or furloughed as a federal employee without pay;

WHEREAS, on January 22, 2019, the State of Connecticut passed HB 5765 permitting municipalities to defer of real estate, motor vehicle and personal property taxes for affected employees of the Federal Government impacted by the shutdown; Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectman, pursuant to HB 5765, hereby establish a deferment program to defer the due date of taxes on real property, personal property or motor vehicles, or water or sewer rates, charges or assessments, owed by affected employees as defined by HB 5765; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectman directs the Tax Collector to administer the deferment program, so that the Town will not to be charge or collect interest on any tax, rate, charge or assessment or part thereof that is payable by an affected employee and which became due during the period when such individual was an affected employee.

RESOLVED, that those affected employees seeking to participate in the Town's deferment program shall prove their eligibility by providing the tax collector with proof of Federal Employment and sign an affidavit stating that they are (a) a resident of this state, (b) the department of the federal government they are employed by, (c) that they are required to work as a federal employee without pay or furloughed as a federal employee without pay, and (d) they will no longer be an affected employee when the branch of the Federal Government they are employed by is funded and its employees are called back to work.

RESOLVED, that each tax, rate, charge or assessment deferred under a program established pursuant to this section shall be due and payable without interest or penalty not later than sixty days after the date on which an individual is no longer an affected employee. Thereafter, any portion of the tax, rate, charge or assessment or installment or portion thereof which remains unpaid and all interest and penalties otherwise provided by law shall apply retroactively to the original due date for the tax, rate, charge or assessment or installment or portion thereof. All provisions of the general statutes relating to continuing, recording and releasing property tax liens and the precedence and enforcement of taxes, rates, charges and assessments shall remain applicable to any deferred tax, rate, charge or assessment or installment or portion thereof.

RESOLVED, that nothing in this section shall affect interest or penalties on, or lien rights or collection of, any tax, rate, charge or assessment due before December 22, 2018, or after the date on which an individual is no longer an affected employee.

Selectman Reynolds motioned to approve the "Resolution Establishing A Tax Deferment Program For Federal Employees Affected By The Shutdown" as read. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Presentation of Highway Garage Options – 2 New Build Options and 1 potential purchase option

- **Wicks Lumber Building**
 - Presentation by Kevin Casey
 - Revised proposal and drawings were presented
 - Overview:
 - Board of Finance rejected the build to suit with lease option.
 - Lease option would have guaranteed operating systems and generally any operational issues that arose such as HVAC problems, broken garage doors and mechanical issues. These types of liabilities will NOT be

covered under the new proposal to purchase.

- Newest proposal includes the combining of office space to accommodate the Town Engineer as well as the Public Works/Facilities Management and Highway Department Personnel.
- Mr. Casey walked the group through the plan changes.
- There will be a marginal pricing impact to include the changes as described.
- Proposed building will be one floor with a possible mezzanine space. The town would be purchasing approximately 3.5 acres and a 21,000 square foot building.
- 1.1 acres would remain with the current landowners to develop.
- Privacy fencing, salt shed, material bins and entries will remain as proposed in original site plan.
- Pricing can be discussed in Executive Session this evening if desired.
- Highway Foreman Mark Cervione noted this proposal meets all the Town's needs.
- The timing of the project depends on how quickly an agreement is made. Assuming a start date of June 2019, demolition should take approximately 2-3 weeks and then the remaining work will begin. Mr. Casey states that with this timeframe the building could be occupied by the first of the year. A Phase One environmental study has been completed and reported no environmental liabilities. There will be a warranty provided to that effect.

- **Wicks Lumber Building**

- Presentation by Mark O'Neill

- Mr. O'Neill took a different approach to his redesigned proposal by breaking the building into two separate buildings thus creating a cold storage building and a garage building.
 - Garage building will be a clear span based on the premise of what he was provided which includes approximately 2,000 square feet of office space, 10,000 square feet of garage space and another 1,000 to 1,500 square feet of basic storage type space.
 - Left it "wide open" with the goal of sitting with the stakeholders and designing the actual office space out at that time.
 - Buildings will not be connected.
 - Provided a financial breakdown of basic items included:
 - \$25,000 included for interior office space work
 - \$10,000 included for cabinetry
 - Gas heat – radiant heat
 - Office space with air conditioning
 - Overhead doors as discussed
 - Wash bay included
 - Site work included
 - Small mezzanine space included
 - Approximately 9.5 acres are included.
 - Building has been switched from a two-floor structure to a one

floor structure.

- Cold storage building would be approximately 4,800 square feet. The Salt Shed would be 40 feet x 80.
 - WPCA may be able to provide water for the wash bay due to proximity.
 - Highway Foreman Mark Cervione noted this proposal meets all the Town's needs.
 - Timing would be approximately 4 months due to the use of panelized construction.
 - There are no environmental issues as this land has never been utilized.
- **123 Austin Street – Potential Purchase**
 - First Selectman Mack invited Town Planner Bill Hawkins to provide an update.
 - Town has requested a site plan to confirm that the cold storage building and salt shed the Highway Department needs in addition to the existing garage would fit on the property.
 - A sketch of wetlands has been provided although it is not as detailed as is necessary. It contains some but not all of the information the Town is requesting.
 - The type of fill used on the site is still in question.
 - Next steps:
 - Still in need of a better site plan.
 - Need to determine if buildings will fit without impacting the wetlands.
 - Proposed buildings will require foundations, which makes the type of fill information even more important.
 - Phase One environmental study was completed.
 - During negotiations, the Town would need to determine whether a Phase Two environmental should be conducted. This would be time-consuming and costly to do at this point.
 - The bottom line is we need a site plan that will accurately reflect whether the property meets the needs of the town before moving forward with further actions.

Discussion and approval of plan for Highway Garage, rescinding all prior approvals, to relocate the Town Highway Garage and refer to Board of Finance and Town Meeting

Selectman Reynolds motioned to table the discussion and approval of plan for Highway Garage, rescinding all prior approvals, to relocate the Town Highway Garage and refer to Board of Finance and Town Meeting. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and appointment of the following to the Economic Development commission:

- a. Brian Banak from alternate to full member to fill the remainder of Roger Tracy's term through March 31, 2021.

- b. Arnie Magid from alternate to full member to fill the remainder of Gloria Smith's term through March 31, 2021.

First Selectman Mack noted that there were two recent resignations on the Economic Development Commission; Roger Tracey and Gloria Smith. First Selectman Mack extended her thanks to Mr. Tracey for his 30 years of dedicated service to the commission and the Town of Suffield. The general practice when a full member steps down is to replace them with an alternate member and backfill the alternate position. This practice is what is proposed with the appointments brought before the selectmen this evening.

Selectman Chafetz expressed his concern with regard to the positions as Gloria Smith is a Democrat and Arnie Magid is a Republican. Selectman Chafetz stated he had no issues with either Mr. Banak or Mr. Magid; however, he did have concerns as to whether or not the general practice in this particular case will be equitable. First Selectman Mack acknowledged his concern and said it came down to a matter of whether or not to deviate from the practice this board has generally followed. She suggested that an option would be to appoint one full member this evening and table the second appointment until the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

Selectman Chafetz motioned to approve the appointment of Brian Banak from alternate to full member to fill the remainder of Roger Tracy's term through March 31, 2021. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Hill motioned to table Agenda item 8b; the appointment of Arnie Magid from alternate to full member to fill the remainder of Gloria Smith's term through March 31, 2021. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Updates

Town Hall Update

PBC Chair Joe Sangiovanni, Building Inspector Ted Flanders and First Selectman Mack worked to utilize the space needs surveys and conceptual plans prepared to date to assure we can meet all of our needs in a renovated Town Hall according to the bond authorization from 2015 which authorized \$5.1 million to perform a number of renovations to the Town Hall. PBC had a very productive meeting last Thursday night.

The Town Attorney and Chris Matejek from Public Works Department are fine-tuning the RFPs (one to Architect and one to Construction Company) for a guaranteed maximum price for renovation of the existing Town Hall. PBC member Kevin Goff is drawing the proposed layout on the existing Town Hall plans. It will be part of the RFP as a conceptual. We are on track for PBC to get the draft to review by Friday for consideration at their next meeting.

Library Update

Encapsulation is complete and the HVAC system is running. Air quality test will be taken tomorrow. If it passes, we will continue with construction. Over the last two days, walkthroughs

have been conducted which included walking through the buildings with the contractors, electricians and the technology department to discuss next steps, refresh everyone's memory and get them back on the same page. Public Works is working with the Library Director to finalize the floor plan based on the renovated building. The floor plan will be reviewed with everyone involved in the project to make sure electrical and technology wiring is optimized. We anticipate change orders but will be closely scrutinizing the plan. The air test results will take 6-10 days. EPA will need to bless the results which we are hoping will not be an issue. The government shutdown could possibly stall this problem but First Selectman Mack will reach out to whomever she needs to in order to advocate for the opening of the library.

Economic Development Update:

- Broadleaf – third party distribution center on Route 75 received its Certificate of Occupancy.
- The new Kickboxing studio in the plaza next to Dunkin Donuts has received its Certificate of Occupancy.
- Broad Brook Brewery – Good news! Engineering plans have passed and some construction work has proceeded.

Ffyer Place Redevelopment:

ACO Facility- Chief Brown, Lieutenant Burrell and First Selectman Mack met with the Interim Superintendent and representatives from Suffield High School and the Agriscience Department to discuss potential usage of the VoAg kennels for our pound. After very productive and open-minded discussion, we determined that this is not a viable option. This determination means that we have exhausted all options available to us absent building a new facility at great expense. Accordingly, we drafted and submitted a request for legislative relief allowing the Town of Suffield to lease space at the newly constructed River Valley Animal Hospital despite the fact that its dog runs are technically 12 inches too short under existing State law. Senator Kissel and Rep. Zawistowski are assisting us with this proposal.

I am pleased to announce that the State of CT funded additional money for the Community Connectivity Grant and we have been awarded \$395,352 to construct sidewalks from Main Street down Mapleton Avenue turning right and all the way down Thompsonville Road!

Mountain Road Trail – Town engineer has been working on designing this. Ten-foot wide multi-use trail will fit. It will connect all the schools by sidewalk. This project will most likely not happen in 2019 due to State Department of Transportation review processes and delays.

Budget Season FY19-20 - Meetings with Department Heads start next week.

McDougall-Walker Prison Tour - Selectman Hill noted that he attended the annual prison tour

at McDougall-Walker Prison on Tuesday, January 22nd. He said he enjoyed the tour and finds the prison to be “very good neighbors.”

Selectman Hill also mentioned that a resident in town who happens to be a pilot for a major airline decided to solicit donations from local businesses in an effort to assist the local air traffic controllers who have been impacted by the government shutdown. Donations were received by Highland Park Market, The Tavern Restaurant at Suffield Country Club, Dunkin Donuts, Francesco’s and Suffield Pizza. Selectman Hill wanted to ensure these local businesses were recognized for stepping up and being so generous during a time of need.

Public Comment

None

Selectman Reynolds motioned to add Agenda item 10a; Executive Session to discuss Town Highway Garage negotiations. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Reynolds motioned to enter Executive Session at 8:21 p.m. to discuss Town Highway Garage negotiations and invited Mark Cervione, Bill Hawkins and Chris Matejek with the option to include Kevin Casey and Mark O’Neill at a later point in the session. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

After initial discussion by the Selectmen and invited attendees, Mr. Casey and Mr. O’Neill each separately entered and exited the Executive Session as requested by the Selectmen. The Executive Session ended at 9:41 p.m.

Selectman Reynolds motioned to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 9:41 p.m.

The next regular Board of Selectmen Meeting will be Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary